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ABSTRACT

This booklet provides teachers with information about the No Child Left Behind Act and how it supports teachers. It includes an overview of the law's "highly qualified" teacher provisions as well as information about other aspects of the law. The booklet offers: "Foreword" (letters from the President of the United States and the Secretary of Education); "What is No Child Left Behind?" (the law that ushered in a new era); "What Does 'Highly Qualified' Mean for Teachers?"; "Questions Frequently Asked by Teachers" (teacher quality, accountability, testing, reading, scientifically based research, and safe schools); "Resources and Support for Teachers" (supporting America's teachers, how No Child Left Behind helps English language learners, reading first: a $6 billion investment to improve the reading skills of young children, how No Child Left Behind helps improve math achievement, and how can I find out more about No Child Left Behind); and "Publications" (bookmarks and brochures, and publications). (SM)

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No Child LEFT BEHIND

A Toolkit for Teachers

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No Child Left Behind: A Toolkit for Teachers

U.S. Department of Education

2003

U.S. Department of Education

Rod Paige
Secretary

Office of the Under Secretary
Eugene W. Hickok
Under Secretary

August 2003

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THE PRESIDENT
CRAWFORD, TEXAS

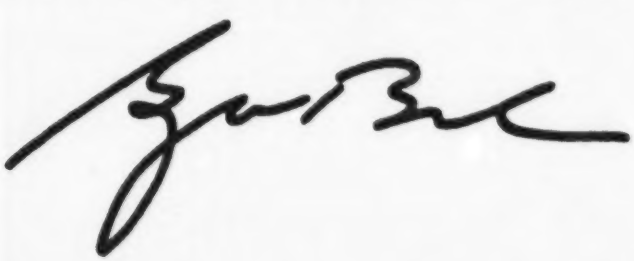
August 8, 2003

I send greetings to school teachers across America.

The success of America's schools depends on capable, motivated, and dedicated teachers who believe in the potential of every child. Our Nation is grateful to you for lending your talents and your hearts to ensuring that no child is left behind. As part of my Administration's efforts to strengthen education in America, we have joined with teachers, principals, parents, and state leaders to set high expectations in public schools and to ensure that each child receives a quality education. The Department of Education's Teacher Toolkit provides information about Federal resources that can assist you in these efforts.

Teachers across our country have devoted their lives to bringing excellence to education in America. By working together, we are building a culture where everyone can learn, and we are helping to create a future of hope, promise, and opportunity for all.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a successful school year.



August 2003

Dear Colleague:

As we begin a new school year, I want to thank you for going the extra mile to ensure that no child is left behind. There is much hard work ahead, but I am confident we will be successful because our nation is blessed with so many dedicated educators who insist on excellence in the classroom.

There is no doubt the *No Child Left Behind Act* is a bold law. It was intended to be so.

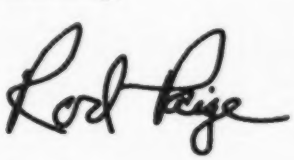
But don't forget that it was written with you, our nation's teachers, in mind. The *No Child Left Behind Act* recognizes that teachers are on the front lines of this historic effort, and it creates a system that provides unprecedented support and assistance to help you be successful in your job.

We know from research that teachers who teach out of field leave the profession before others, so the law helps make sure teachers are teaching the subjects they know. There are also important liability provisions to protect you from unfounded lawsuits. To help you continually improve your skills, the president and Congress are providing historic levels of funding. President Bush's request for just 2004 includes more than $4.5 billion to support teachers through training, recruitment, incentives, loan forgiveness and tax relief.

This teacher toolkit is designed to provide you with valuable information about the *No Child Left Behind Act* and how it supports teachers. It includes an overview of the law's "highly qualified" teacher provisions as well as useful information about other aspects of the law. I hope you find it useful for better understanding the law and what it means for you.

We have a significant challenge before us. With your dedication, I am confident we will rise to the challenge to give every child—no matter where they are from or the color of their skin—the opportunity to achieve the American dream.

Sincerely,



Rod Paige

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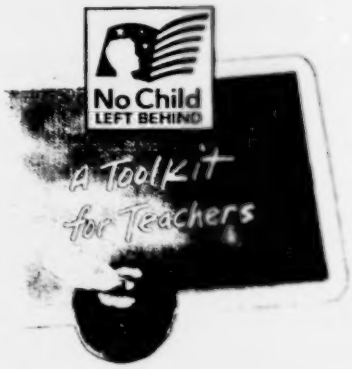
WHAT IS *NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND*?



NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND
THE LAW THAT USHERED IN A NEW ERA

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB)[1] is a landmark in education reform designed to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools. Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support from Congress, the law was signed by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. Clearly, our children are our future, and, as President Bush has expressed, "Too many of our neediest children are being left behind."

With passage of *No Child Left Behind*, Congress reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA)— the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. In amending ESEA, the new law represents a sweeping overhaul of federal efforts to support elementary and secondary education in the United States. It is built on four common-sense pillars: accountability for results, an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research, expanded parental options and expanded local control and flexibility.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

Identifies Schools and Districts in Need of Improvement

As part of the accountability provisions set forth in the law, *No Child Left Behind* has set the goal of having every child making the grade on state-defined education standards by the end of the 2013–2014 school year. To reach that goal, every state has developed benchmarks to measure progress and make sure every child is learning. States are required to separate (or disaggregate) student achievement data, holding schools accountable for subgroups, so that no child falls through the cracks. A school or school district that doesn't meet the state's definition of "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) for two straight years (schoolwide or in any major subgroup) is considered to be "in need of improvement."

No Child Left Behind **does not label schools as "failing."** Instead, schools are identified as **"in need of improvement,"** and they are given assistance to improve. Testing called for in NCLB helps schools identify subject areas and teaching methods that need improvement. For example, if reading scores do not reach the state's benchmark, the school knows it needs to improve its reading program.

In the past, these schools might not have received attention and the help they need to improve. Through *No Child Left Behind*, every state has made a commitment that it will no longer turn a blind eye when schools are not meeting the needs of **every** student in their care.

Provides Schools in Need of Improvement Help to Get Back on Track

When a school is found to be "in need of improvement," school officials are required to work with parents, school staff, the district and outside experts **to develop a plan to turn around the school.** The district must ensure that the school receives needed technical assistance as it develops and implements its improvement plan. Examples of technical assistance include:

- Help identifying problems in instruction or curriculum.
- Help analyzing and revising the school's budget so that resources are more effectively targeted to activities most likely to help students learn.

The school's improvement plan must incorporate strategies, relying on scientifically based research, that will strengthen core academic subjects, especially the subject areas that resulted in the school's being deemed in need of improvement. Schools in need of improvement **must spend at least 10 percent of their Title I funds to improve the skills of teachers**. Schools in need of improvement are also expected to develop strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school and to incorporate a teacher-mentoring program.

Improves Teaching and Learning by Providing Better Information to Teachers and Principals

Annual tests to measure children's progress provide teachers with independent information about each child's strengths and weaknesses. With this knowledge, teachers can craft lessons to make sure each student meets or exceeds the standards. In addition, principals can use the data to assess where the school should invest resources such as professional development. For example, tests may show that the school's students are doing fine when it comes to multiplication but are struggling with fractions. That might mean that the curriculum for teaching fractions needs to be adjusted, or additional professional development in teaching fractions should be provided.

Ensures That Teacher Quality Is a High Priority

No Child Left Behind outlines the minimum qualifications needed by teachers and paraprofessionals who work on any facet of classroom instruction. It requires that states develop plans to achieve the goal that all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified by the end of the 2005–06 school year. States must include in their plans annual, measurable objectives that each local school district and school must meet in moving toward the goal. They must also report on their progress in annual report cards.

Gives More Resources to Schools

Today, local, state and federal taxpayers spend more than $8,000 per pupil on average.[2] States and local school districts are now receiving more federal funding than ever before for all programs under *No Child Left Behind*: **$23.7 billion**, most of which will be used during the 2003–04 school year. This represents an increase of 59.8 percent from 2000 to 2003. A large portion of these funds is for grants under Title I of NCLB, called Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged. Title I grants are awarded to states and districts to help them improve the education of disadvantaged students, turn around low-performing schools, improve teacher quality, and increase choices for parents. For fiscal year (FY) 2003, funding for Title I alone is $11.7 billion—an increase of 33 percent since the passage of *No Child Left Behind*. President Bush's FY 2004 budget request would increase spending on Title I by 48 percent since he took office.

Scientifically Based Research

Focuses on What Works

No Child Left Behind puts a special emphasis on implementing education programs and practices that have been clearly demonstrated to be effective through rigorous scientific research. Federal funding will be targeted to support such programs. For example, the Reading First program makes federal funds available to help reading teachers in the early grades strengthen old skills and gain new ones in instructional techniques that scientifically based research has shown to be effective.

Supports Learning in the Early Years, Thereby Preventing Many Learning Difficulties That May Arise Later

Children who enter school with language skills and pre-reading skills (for example, understanding that print reads from left to right and top to bottom) are more likely to learn to read well in the early grades and succeed in later years. In fact, research shows that most reading problems faced by adolescents and adults are the result of problems that could have been prevented through good instruction in their early childhood years (Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998).[3] It is never too early to start building language skills by talking with and reading to children. *No Child Left Behind* targets resources for early childhood education so that all youngsters get the right start.

Expanded Parental Options

Provides More Information for Parents about Their Child's Progress

Under *No Child Left Behind*, each state must measure every public school student's progress in reading and math in each of grades 3 through 8 and at least once during grades 10 through 12. By school year 2007–2008, assessments (or testing) in science must be under way. These assessments must be aligned with state academic content and achievement standards. They will provide parents with objective data about their child's academic strengths and weaknesses. They will also provide the public with information about the progress of their area schools.

Alerts Parents to Important Information on the Performance of Their Child's School

No Child Left Behind requires states and school districts to give parents easy-to-read, detailed report cards on schools and districts, telling them which ones are succeeding and why. Included in the report cards are student achievement data broken out by race, ethnicity, gender, English language proficiency, migrant status, disability status and low-income status, as well as important information about the professional qualifications of teachers. With these provisions, *No Child Left Behind* ensures that parents have important, timely information about the schools their children attend—whether they are performing well or not for *all* children, regardless of their background.

Gives Parents Whose Children Attend Schools in Need of Improvement New Options

In the first year that a school is considered to be in need of improvement, parents receive the option to transfer their child to a higher-performing public school, including a charter school, in the district. Transportation must also be provided to the new school, subject to certain cost limitations. In the second year that a school is considered to be in need of improvement, the school must continue offering public school choice. Additionally, the school must also offer as an option supplemental services such as free tutoring to low-income students.

Expanded Flexibility and Local Control

Allows More Flexibility

In exchange for strong accountability, *No Child Left Behind* gives states and districts more flexibility in the use of their federal education funding. For instance, NCLB makes it possible for districts to transfer up to 50 percent of federal formula grant funds they receive under different parts of the law (Title II—Improving Teacher Quality and Educational Technology, Title IV—Safe and Drug Free School Grants, Title V—Innovative Programs) to any one of these programs or to the Title I program (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged). This allows districts the opportunity to target resources as they see fit, without separate requests and approval. As a result, principals and administrators spend less time filling out forms and dealing with federal red tape. They have more time to devote to students' needs. They have more freedom to implement innovations and allocate resources as policymakers at the state and local levels see fit, thereby giving local people a greater opportunity to affect decisions regarding their schools' programs.

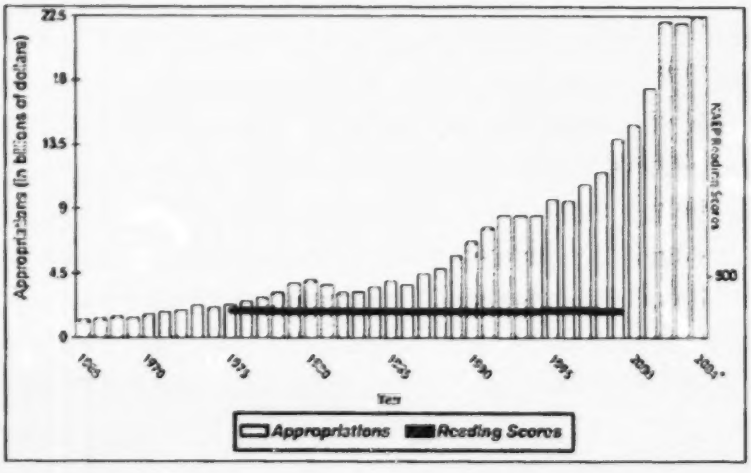
Encourages Teacher Development

No Child Left Behind gives states and districts the flexibility to find innovative ways to improve teacher quality, including alternative certification, merit pay for master teachers and bonuses for people who teach in high-need schools and subject areas like math and science.

The Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program (from Title II in NCLB) gives states and districts flexibility to choose the teacher professional development strategies that best meet their needs to help raise student achievement.

Why *No Child Left Behind* Is Important to America

Federal Spending on K-12 Education under *the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (NCLB) and NAEP Reading Scores (Age 9)*



Note: Appropriations for NCLB do not include funding for special education.
*Reflects the President's budget request for 2004.
Source: U.S. Department of Education Budget Service and *NAEP 1999 Trends in Academic Progress*

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Since *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act* first passed Congress in 1965, through 2003, the federal government has spent more than $242 billion to help educate disadvantaged children. According to the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on reading in 2002, only 31 percent of fourth-graders can read at a proficient or advanced level and thereby demonstrate solid academic achievement. And while achievement among the highest performing students has remained stable, and America's lowest performers have increased only slightly, the achievement gap in this country between rich and poor, as well as white and minority students remains wide (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2002).[5]

The good news is that some schools in cities and towns across the nation are creating high achievement for children with a history of low performance. If some schools can do it, then all schools should be able to do it.

United for Results

Because of *No Child Left Behind*:

Parents will have more information about their children's academic strengths and weaknesses and how well schools are performing. They will have other options and resources for helping their children if their schools are chronically in need of improvement.

Teachers will have the training and resources they need for teaching effectively, using curricula that are grounded in scientifically based research. Annual testing lets them know areas in which students need extra attention.

Principals will have information they need to strengthen their schools and to put into practice methods and strategies backed by sound, scientific research.

Superintendents will be able to see which of their schools and principals are doing the best job and which need help to improve.

School boards will be able to measure how their districts are doing and to measure their districts in relation to others across the state. They will have more and better information on which to base decisions about priorities in their districts.

Chief state school officers will know how the schools in their states and in other states are doing; they will be better able to pinpoint where guidance and resources are needed.

Governors will have a yearly report card on how their states' schools are doing. They will be able to highlight accomplishments of the best schools and target help to those schools that are in need of improvement.

Community leaders and volunteer groups will have information they can use to rally their members in efforts to help children and schools that need the most help.

WHAT DOES 'HIGHLY QUALIFIED' MEAN FOR TEACHERS?

THE HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER PROVISIONS OF *NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND*

There is much confusion about exactly what *No Child Left Behind's* highly qualified teacher provisions include and what they mean for individual teachers. This toolkit addresses many of the key issues.

WHY *NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND* INCLUDES PROVISIONS ON TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Recent studies offer compelling evidence that teacher quality is one of the most critical components of how well students achieve. For instance, studies in both Tennessee and Texas found that students who had effective teachers greatly outperformed those who had ineffective teachers. In the Tennessee study, students with highly effective teachers for three years in a row scored 50 percentage points higher on a test of math skills than those whose teachers were ineffective (Sanders and Rivers, 1996).[6]

In recognition of the importance of having effective teachers, *No Child Left Behind* includes provisions stating that all teachers in core academic areas must be highly qualified by the end of the 2005–2006 school year. It also requires that newly hired teachers in Title I programs or schools be highly qualified immediately. (Note: All teachers hired after the first day of the 2002–2003 school year in Title I school wide programs must be highly qualified. However, in Title I targeted assistance schools, only those teachers paid with Title I funds need to be highly qualified immediately. Check with your district to find out your school designation.)

"Highly qualified" is a specific term defined by NCLB. The law outlines a list of minimum requirements related to content knowledge and teaching skills that a highly qualified teacher would meet. However, recognizing the importance of state and local control of education, the law provides the flexibility for each state to develop a definition of highly qualified that is consistent with NCLB as well as with the unique needs of each state.

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Which Teachers Are Covered by *No Child Left Behind*?

Any public school teacher, elementary or secondary who teaches a core academic subject (English, reading or language arts, math, science, history, civics and government, geography, economics, the arts, and foreign language) must be highly qualified. Special education teachers and teachers of English language learners must be highly qualified if they teach core academic subjects to their students. The law is clear: all students deserve the high-quality instruction they need for success.

How States Determine Their Highly Qualified Teacher Provisions

In general, under *No Child Left Behind*, a highly qualified teacher must have:

- A bachelor's degree.
- Full state certification and licensure as defined by the state.
- Demonstrated competency, as defined by the state, in each core academic subject he or she teaches.

The first requirement is straightforward. For the second, the state has freedom to define certification as it sees fit. The state can use this opportunity to streamline its certification requirements to the essential elements. It can also create alternate routes to certification.

Regarding the third requirement, the need to demonstrate competence in the subjects the teacher teaches, states are provided with significant flexibility to design ways to do this, especially for core academic teachers with experience. There are also requirements within the law to consider the differences between elementary and middle and high school teachers as well as between newly hired teachers and those with experience.

New Elementary School Teachers

Elementary school teachers who are new to the profession must demonstrate competency by passing a rigorous state test on subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading or language arts, writing, mathematics and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum.

New Middle and High School Teachers

At the middle and high school levels, new teachers must demonstrate competency either by passing a rigorous state test in each subject they teach, or by holding an academic major or course work equivalent to an academic major, an advanced degree or advanced certification or credentials.

Elementary, Middle and High School Teachers with Experience

Teachers with experience must either meet the requirements for new teachers, or they may demonstrate competency based on a system designed by each state. NCLB recognizes that many teachers who have experience may already have the qualifications necessary to be deemed highly qualified. Therefore the law allows states to create a high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE) based on the following criteria:

1. Are set by the state for grade-appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills.
2. Are aligned with challenging state academic content and student achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals and school administrators.

3. Provide objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches.
4. Are applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the state.
5. Take into consideration, but are not based primarily on, the time a teacher has been teaching the academic subject.
6. Are made available to the public upon request.

This evaluation may involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency.

****Important:** States are currently in the process of developing their HOUSSE standards for experienced teachers. Many are using point systems that allow teachers to count a combination of years of successful classroom experience, participation in high-quality professional development that evaluates what the teacher has learned, service on curriculum development teams and other important activities related to developing knowledge in an academic area. Once all states begin implementing these standards, many experienced teachers will find that they already have demonstrated competency in the subjects they teach. Others may only need to take minimal steps to meet the requirements.

States also have the flexibility to create and make determinations about their subject matter competency tests. As each state defines their grade level content standards, it must choose appropriate assessments for new teachers, as well as provide opportunities for experienced teachers to demonstrate subject matter competency through a test or other means.

How the Federal Government Helps

Teacher Assistance Corps

At the direction of Secretary Rod Paige, the U.S. Department of Education has formed the Teacher Assistance Corps (TAC), which will work with the states on teacher quality initiatives to meet the unique teacher quality needs in each state. Teams will provide assistance and share ideas from other states about new and innovative ways to approach teacher quality issues. States in turn should communicate information about teacher quality to districts and schools.

Funding for Teacher Quality Initiatives

No Child Left Behind provides funds to states and districts to conduct a wide variety of activities aimed at improving teacher quality. Remember that districts can transfer up to 50 percent of federal formula grant funds they receive under different parts of the law (Title II—Improving Teacher Quality and Educational Technology, Title IV—Safe and Drug Free School Grants, Title V—Innovative Programs) to any one of these programs or to their Title I program (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged). This allows districts the opportunity to target resources as they see fit, without separate requests and approval.

Title II: Improving Teacher Quality State Grants

Specific funds are available to all states through Title II. States have already submitted an application describing their general annual measurable objectives for increasing the percentage of highly qualified teachers, how they will use funds to meet the teacher and paraprofessional requirements of the law, and how they will hold districts accountable for their progress in helping all teachers reach the highly qualified standard.

Each district must also conduct a needs assessment, outlining activities that need to be implemented to give teachers the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills they need, and to give principals the instructional leadership skills to help teachers. NCLB requires that teachers be able to participate in the needs assessment process. Talk to your state or district about how you can get involved in this process.

States also must determine if districts are making progress on teacher quality goals, called annual measurable objectives. If the district does not make progress for two consecutive years, it must develop an improvement plan to address reasons for not making progress. After three years, if the district still does not make progress, the state must enter into an agreement about the use of its Title II funds. This agreement will include development strategies for the district to meet annual measurable objectives.

Title I: Grants to Districts

Each district that receives Title I funds must spend at least 5 percent of its Title I allocation on professional development activities to help teachers become highly qualified. With President Bush's record $12.4 billion requested for the program, the amount targeted to professional development would be at least $600 million.

Educational Technology State Grants Program

Each district receiving Educational Technology State Grants funds must spend at least 25 percent (a total of $159 million at President Bush's requested level) on high-quality professional development in the integration of technology into curricula and instruction, unless a district can demonstrate that it already provides such training.

Title III: English Language Acquisition Program

About $68 million will be available under a set-aside from the Title III English Language Acquisition State Grants to continue competitive grants of up to five years to institutions of higher education for professional development to improve instruction for limited English proficient students.

Note: There are several other grant programs supported by the federal government for teachers, such as: **Teaching American History, Math and Science Partnerships, Troops for Teachers, and Transition to Teaching,** among others. To find out more, go to *www.ed.gov*.

Report Cards and Parent Notification

Under *No Child Left Behind,* states and districts must provide public information about schools and teachers. Among the required reports are: Annual State Report Cards and the "Parent's Right to Know". These reports will all begin with data from the 2002–2003 school year.

The **Annual State Report Cards**, made public by the state, include the following teacher quality information:

- Professional qualifications of teachers in the state.
- Percentage of teachers teaching under emergency or provisional credentials.
- Percentage of classes statewide taught by teachers not meeting the highly qualified teacher requirements (both in total and broken out by high-poverty and low-poverty school status).

In addition, the "Parent's Right to Know" will provide two types of communications to parents of students in Title I schools.

Parent Notification by District

A district receiving Title I funds must send a notification to parents, informing them of their right to request information on the qualifications of their child's teacher. The information that the district must provide (if requested) includes the following:

- Whether the teacher has met the certification requirements of the state.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher in the field or discipline of his or her certificate or degree.
- Whether or not the child is provided service by a paraprofessional and, if so, his or her qualifications.

Parent Notification by School

Additionally, schools receiving federal Title I funds must send to each parent the information below. This information must be in a clear and understandable format for parents. Notice must be timely, and includes the following:

- Information about the level of achievement of the child in the state assessments.
- Timely notice that the child has been assigned or taught for up to four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

These notifications are meant to encourage parent involvement and improve communication between the family and the school. To find out if your school receives Title I funds, and if these parental notification requirements apply to your school, contact your district.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT *NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND*

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED BY TEACHERS

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) amends the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)* by making significant changes in the major federal programs that support schools' efforts to educate our nation's students. NCLB is based on principles of increased flexibility and local control, stronger accountability for results, expanded options for parents and an emphasis on effective teaching methods based on proven, scientifically based professional development strategies that have been shown to increase student academic achievement.

The following are common questions about NCLB, specifically as the law applies to teachers. This section will help teachers understand the content and intent of this landmark legislation and how it impacts them as they serve in our nation's classrooms. Of course, as states, districts and schools implement these changes, new questions will arise and new issues will surface.

TEACHER QUALITY

Why is teacher quality such an important issue?

A major objective of *No Child Left Behind* is to ensure high-quality teachers for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity or income, because a well-prepared teacher is vitally important to a child's education. In fact, research demonstrates the clear correlation between student academic achievement and teacher quality (Whitehurst, 2002).[7] Studies also show that many classrooms and schools, particularly those with economically disadvantaged students, have a disproportionate number of teachers who teach out of field or are not highly qualified (Ingersoll, R., 2002).[8]

What are the basic requirements in the federal law for highly qualified teachers?

The law requires that teachers meet these three basic requirements:

- Hold a bachelor's degree.
- Obtain full state certification (which can be "alternative certification").
- Demonstrate subject matter competency in the core academic subjects the teacher teaches.

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What does "full state certification" mean?

Full state certification is determined by the state in accordance with state policy. NCLB gives states flexibility to set their own certification requirements. NCLB encourages states to have high standards, and to use this opportunity to streamline their certification requirements to make sure that hoops and hurdles are not discouraging talented individuals from becoming teachers.

What does "alternative certification" mean?

It can mean two things. First, alternative certification programs are those that allow candidates to teach while they are meeting the state certification requirements. These programs must provide solid professional development to the teachers before they enter the classroom and while they are teaching and must also include a mentoring or induction component. Teachers in these programs may teach for up to three years while they earn their state certification, provided they have met the other highly qualified requirements.

Second, states can create alternate routes to full certification. For example, they can adopt a new system supported by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE), which allows teacher candidates to demonstrate their competence through an assessment rather than through "seat time" in specific education school courses. Teachers who pass the assessment would be considered fully certified before they enter the classroom.

Which academic subjects are considered the core academic subjects?

NCLB recognizes the importance of the liberal arts. For this reason, "core academic subjects" include English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography.

NCLB requires that teachers who teach in the core academic subjects meet the highly qualified requirements. The list of core academic subjects includes the arts. What does the law mean by "the arts"?

While the list of core academic subjects in the law includes the arts, it does not define the arts. Each state can determine its own definition of "the arts."

What are the deadlines for meeting the highly qualified teacher requirements?

Beginning with the 2002–03 school year, teachers of core academic subjects newly hired to teach in Title I programs must meet all requirements. By the end of the 2005–06 school year, all teachers of core academic subjects must meet all requirements in every state that receives Title I funds.

How do I become highly qualified if I am a new teacher?

Those who are considering becoming highly qualified teachers must be well versed in their subject area. For this reason, the law requires that new teachers must hold a bachelor's degree, full state certification, and demonstrate subject-matter competence. They can do this by passing a rigorous subject test in each of the academic subjects the teacher teaches. If the teacher is a middle or high school teacher, he or she may demonstrate subject area competency by having successfully completed, in each of the core academic subjects he or she teaches, an academic major, a graduate degree, course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major or advanced

certification or credentialing. New elementary school teachers may demonstrate the required competency *only* by passing the state test.

How do I become highly qualified if I am an experienced teacher?

Many experienced teachers are already highly qualified. Experienced teachers must meet the three basic requirements by the end of the 2005–06 school year. They must have a bachelor's degree and meet certification (no emergency certificates). For the third requirement, there are multiple ways for experienced teachers to demonstrate subject area competency. Teachers may opt for taking a subject matter test (as determined by the state) or demonstrate competency through the state system of "high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE)." In addition, middle and high school teachers may demonstrate competency if they have a major (or its equivalent) or advanced credentials in the subject they teach.

What is the "high, objective, uniform state system of evaluation" (HOUSSE)?

This is a system by which the state can determine that an experienced teacher meets the subject matter competency requirements in the law. NCLB sets criteria for the state to follow when it designs this system for experienced teachers. The criteria:

1. Are set by the state for grade-appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills.
2. Are aligned with challenging state academic content and student achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals and school administrators.
3. Provide objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches.
4. Are applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the state.
5. Take into consideration, but are not based primarily on, the time a teacher has been teaching the academic subject.
6. Are made available to the public upon request.

The law clearly recognizes that teachers who have been in the classroom have a variety of experiences and training which may demonstrate their competency in the subjects they teach. Therefore, the HOUSSE system may involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency. For more information about the state designed standards for HOUSSE, contact your state education agency.

Do highly qualified teacher requirements apply to special education teachers?

Yes, if a teacher teaches any core academic subject, then under NCLB he or she must be highly qualified. However, special educators who do not directly instruct students in a core academic subject or who provide only consultation to highly qualified teachers of core academic subjects in adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions or selecting appropriate accommodations do not need to meet the highly qualified requirements.

Note: Teachers must also take into account the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* requirements for special education teachers.

Do the highly qualified teacher requirements apply to teachers of English language learners?

Yes, if teachers of English language learners teach core academic subjects, they must meet the requirements of the law for highly qualified teachers. In addition, teachers of English language learners who teach in instructional programs funded under Title III must be fluent in English and any other language in which they provide instruction, including having written and oral communications skills.

Do public school teachers in programs for neglected or delinquent students need to be highly qualified?

Yes. All teachers teaching core academic subjects must be highly qualified in the subjects they teach. All students, regardless of their learning environment, deserve teachers who know the subject matter well.

Do long- and short-term substitute teachers need to meet the highly qualified requirements?

Substitutes take the place of the teacher, and therefore play a critical role in the classroom and the school. It is vital that they be able to perform their duties well. Although short-term substitutes do not need to meet the highly qualified teaching requirements in NCLB, it is strongly recommended that a long-term substitute teacher meet the requirements for a highly qualified teacher as defined in the law. In addition, as states and districts establish a definition for a long-term substitute, they should bear in mind that the law requires that parents must be notified if their child has received instruction for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

May a teacher who is highly qualified to teach one subject area teach additional subjects, and still be considered highly qualified, if they have an emergency certificate or temporary permit to teach those subjects?

No. To be highly qualified requires a teacher to demonstrate a high level of competency in each core academic subject he or she teaches. Hence, the teacher described in this question is highly qualified in terms of the first subject but not in terms of the additional subject. The teacher will not be considered highly qualified in the additional subject area until he or she has passed a rigorous state academic subject test or demonstrated (through the other means the law permits) the required competence in the additional content area.

Are teachers in alternative route programs considered highly qualified *before* they demonstrate competency in each core academic subject that they are or will be teaching?

No. There are three criteria that a teacher must meet in order to be considered highly qualified under NCLB: a bachelor's degree, full state certification and a demonstration of competency. Teachers who are satisfactorily completing alternative route certification programs must have a bachelor's degree and have demonstrated subject matter competence already.

Do charter school teachers need to be highly qualified?

Yes. Charter school teachers who teach core academic subjects are covered by the requirements for highly qualified teachers, and must comply with any provision in a state's charter school law regarding certification. All charter school teachers of core academic subjects, like other public school teachers, must hold a bachelor's degree and demonstrate competence in the core academic areas in which they teach. It is important to note, however, that a teacher in a charter school does not have to be licensed or certified by the state if the state does not require such licensure or certification for its charter school teachers.

Can a teacher with middle school certification be considered highly qualified?

Yes, a teacher who has received full state certification at the middle school level has the certification needed to be highly qualified under the requirements of the law. The teacher must also hold at least a bachelor's degree and demonstrate subject-matter competency in the subjects he or she teaches, as described in the law. The state determines certification requirements. Contact your state education agency to find out the certification requirements in your state.

May a middle or high school teacher be considered highly qualified if he or she is certified by the state, has a bachelor's degree and holds a minor in the academic subject(s) he or she teaches?

No. Whether new to the profession or not, if a middle or high school teacher has only a minor in the area he or she teaches, that teacher will not be considered to have met the highly qualified subject matter competency requirements under NCLB.

For the purposes of demonstrating subject matter competency for teachers in middle grades, who determines whether middle grades are designated elementary or secondary school?

State law determines whether a grade level is elementary or secondary. Therefore, NCLB does not directly address the issue of whether teachers in middle grades are to be considered elementary school teachers, with general core content knowledge, or secondary content specialists. For the purposes of determining whether a middle school teacher meets the subject matter competency requirements of NCLB, states are encouraged to examine, for each core academic subject, the degree of rigor and technicality of the subject matter that a teacher needs to know in relation to the state's content standards and academic achievement standards. The intent of NCLB is to ensure that teachers have sufficient subject matter knowledge and skills to instruct effectively in the core academic subject he or she teaches.

What is effective professional development?

Effective teacher professional development is more than just course work designed to fill a state or district requirement. It is a set of activities that produces a demonstrable and measurable effect on student academic achievement. NCLB emphasizes that effective professional development must be grounded in scientifically based research. Research shows that professional development works best when it is part of a systemwide effort to improve and integrate teacher quality at all stages: preparation, induction, support and ongoing development.

What are the requirements in NCLB for paraprofessionals or teachers' aides?

While paraprofessionals or teachers' aides are valuable assets to many learning communities, they are not qualified to fill the role of teachers—a role that, unfortunately, many have been called upon to fill, especially in schools that are under-staffed. *No Child Left Behind* is clear that teachers' aides may provide instructional support services only under the direct supervision of a teacher. In addition, the law allows teachers' aides to facilitate instruction only if they have met certain academic requirements: They must have at least an associate's degree or two years of college, or they must meet a rigorous standard of quality through a formal state or local assessment. Paraprofessionals or aides do not need to meet the requirements if their role does not involve facilitating instruction. For instance, paraprofessionals who serve as hall monitors do not have to meet the same academic requirements, because they are not assisting in classroom instruction. Contact your state or district for more information on the status of paraprofessionals in your school.

What is advanced certification or advanced credentialing?

Advanced certification is an opportunity for teachers to take a reflective look at their own teaching and learn more about how to be a master teacher. Programs around the nation provide opportunities for teachers to take teaching to a new level and challenge themselves as educators and students. In addition, for the purposes of meeting the highly qualified teacher requirements in NCLB, advanced certification and credentialing are vehicles by which middle and high school teachers may demonstrate subject matter competency in the subjects they teach. Each state may define these terms and choose how to implement them for the intended purpose of allowing middle and high school teachers to demonstrate subject matter competency. To learn more about the different opportunities in your state, contact your state certification or credentialing office.

Does the federal government provide funds for professional development and teacher assessments, such as the Praxis or state-approved subject matter competency tests?

Yes. Title I and Title II funds may be used for states to provide professional development or testing for teachers. Contact your state or district for more details.

ACCOUNTABILITY

What is "adequate yearly progress"? How does measuring it help to improve schools?

No Child Left Behind requires each state to define adequate yearly progress for school districts and schools, within the parameters set by Title I of NCLB. In defining adequate yearly progress, each state sets the minimum levels of improvement—measurable in terms of student performance—that school districts and schools must achieve within time frames specified in the law. In general, it works like this: Each state begins by setting a starting point that is based on the performance of its lowest-achieving demographic group or of the lowest-achieving schools in the state, whichever is higher. The state then sets the bar or level of student achievement that a school must attain in order to continue to show adequate yearly progress. Subsequent thresholds must be raised at least once every three years, until, at the end of 12 years, all students in the state are achieving at the proficient level on state assessments in reading or language arts and math.

What if a school does not improve?

States and local school districts will aid schools that receive Title I funds in making meaningful changes that will improve their performance. In the meantime, districts will offer parents options for children in schools needing improvement, including extra help to children from low-income families.

No Child Left Behind lays out an action plan and timetable for steps to be taken when a Title I school does not improve, as follows:

- A Title I school that has not made adequate yearly progress, as defined by the state, for two consecutive school years will be identified by the district before the beginning of the next school year as needing improvement. School officials will develop a two-year plan to turn around the school. The district will ensure that the school receives needed technical assistance as it develops and implements its improvement plan. Students must be offered the option of transferring to another public school in the district—which may include a public charter school—that has not been identified as needing school improvement.
- If the school does not make adequate yearly progress for three years, the school remains in school-improvement status, and the district must continue to offer public school choice to all students. In addition, students from low-income families are eligible to receive supplemental educational services, such as tutoring or remedial classes, from a state-approved provider and selected by parents.
- If the school does not make adequate progress for four years, the district must implement certain corrective actions to improve the school, such as replacing certain staff or fully implementing a new curriculum, while continuing to offer public school choice and supplemental educational services for low-income students.
- If a school does not make adequate yearly progress for a fifth year, the school district must initiate plans for restructuring the school. This may include reopening the school as a charter school, replacing all or most of the school staff or turning over school operations either to the state or to a private company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness.

In addition, the law requires states to identify for improvement those districts that do not make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years or longer and to take corrective actions.

How are school report cards put together and what kind of information do they provide?

Reports on individual schools are part of the annual district report cards, also known as local report cards. Each school district must prepare and disseminate annual local report cards that include information on how students in the district and in each school performed on state assessments. The report cards must state student performance in terms of three levels: basic, proficient and advanced. Achievement data must be disaggregated, or broken out, by student subgroups according to: race, ethnicity, gender, English language proficiency, migrant status, disability status and low-income status. The report cards must also tell which schools have been identified as needing improvement, corrective action or restructuring.

What information is provided on state report cards?

Each state must produce and disseminate annual report cards that provide information on student achievement in the state—both overall and broken out according to the same subgroups as those appearing on the district report cards listed above.

State report cards include:

- State assessment results by performance level (basic, proficient and advanced) and disaggregated by subgroups, including (1) two-year trend data for each subject and grade tested; and (2) a comparison between annual objectives and actual performance for each student group.
- Percentage of each group of students not tested, by grade and subject.
- Graduation rates for high school.
- An additional indicator selected by the state for elementary and middle school student achievement.
- Performance of school districts on adequate yearly progress measures, including the number and names of each school district and school identified as needing improvement.
- Professional qualifications of teachers in the state, including the percentage of teachers in the classroom with only emergency or provisional credentials and the percentage of classes in the state that are not taught by highly qualified teachers, including a comparison between high- and low-income schools.

How are teachers or schools that do well rewarded?

No Child Left Behind requires states to provide state academic achievement awards to schools that close achievement gaps between groups of students or that exceed academic achievement goals. States may also use Title I funds to financially reward teachers in schools that receive academic achievement awards. In addition, states must designate as distinguished schools those that have made the greatest gains in closing the achievement gap or in exceeding achievement goals.

How and when are parents notified about the qualifications of their child's teacher?

It is up to the state and district to decide how these notifications are made. At the beginning of each school year, the district is required by law to notify parents who have children in Title I schools of their right to receive this and other information. Any school receiving Title I funds is required by law to notify parents if their child has been assigned to a teacher for four or more consecutive weeks who does not meet the state's highly qualified teacher requirements. This notification must be completed in a timely manner.

TESTING

On which subjects are students tested? When are they tested?

No Child Left Behind requires that by the 2005–06 school year, each state measure every child's progress in reading and math in each of grades 3 through 8 and at least once during grades 10 through 12. In the meantime, each state must administer for assessments in reading and math at three grade spans (3-5, 6-9 and 10-12). By school year 2007–2008, states must also have in place science assessments to be administered at least once during grades 3-5, grades 6-9 and grades 10–12. Further, states must ensure that districts administer tests of English proficiency—measuring oral language, listening, comprehension, reading, and writing skills in English—to all English language learners, as of the 2002–03 school year.

Students may still undergo state assessments in other subject areas (i.e., history, geography and writing skills), if and when the state requires it. *No Child Left Behind*, however, requires assessments only in the areas of reading or language arts, math and soon science.

How is testing handled for children with disabilities? How is it handled for those with limited English proficiency?

No Child Left Behind requires that all children be assessed. In order to show adequate yearly progress, schools

must test at least 95 percent of the various subgroups of children, including students with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. For students with severe disabilities, states must create alternative assessments. These are designed by the state for students with significant disabilities who are unable to take a regular assessment, even with appropriate accommodations. States must provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency. For the latter, accommodations may include native-language versions of the assessment; however, in the area of reading and language arts, students who have been in U.S. schools for three consecutive years must be assessed in English.

For more information on accommodations in a particular state, contact your state education agency.

Some say that testing causes teachers to teach to the test. Is that true?

State assessments are expected to measure how well students meet the state's academic standards, which define what students should know and be able to do in different subject areas at different grade levels. Under the previous reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* in 1994, states were required to develop or adopt standards in mathematics and in reading or language arts. *No Child Left Behind* requires states to do the same with science standards by 2006. If teachers cover subject matter required by the standards and teach it well, then students will master the material on which they will be tested—and probably much more. In that case, students will need no special test preparation in order to do well.

State assessments sound like they take a lot of time and effort. What will be gained?

The point of state assessments is to measure student learning. A key principle of quality management is the importance of measuring what is valued (e.g., production rates; costs of materials, etc.). Such measures enable an organization to identify where and how to improve operations. In the same manner, if schools and school systems are to continuously improve, they must measure growth in student achievement. After all, the goal of all activities in schools and school systems is teaching and learning, and the key question is: Are the students learning?

How does testing help teachers?

Annual testing provides teachers with a great deal of information. For example, overall poor results could indicate that the curriculum needs to be reviewed and aligned with the content upon which state standards are based; poor results could also mean that teachers need to modify their instructional methods. Another likely indicator of the same problems would be if teachers saw poor performance by their students in certain areas. Test results could also help teachers to clarify those areas in which they may need professional development. Finally, teachers gain a great deal of information about the performance of individual students that enables them to meet the particular needs of every child.

READING

What's the current situation—how well are America's children reading?

Our students are not reading nearly well enough. As mentioned earlier, results of the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress on reading showed that only 31 percent of the nation's fourth-graders performed at or above the proficient achievement level, thus demonstrating solid academic performance. And, while scores for the highest-performing students have remained the same, and those of America's lowest-performing students have slightly increased, the achievement gap remains wide (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2002).[9]

What is the key to turning this situation around?

Research has consistently identified the critical skills that young students need to learn in order to become good readers (National Reading Panel, 2000).[10] Teachers across different states and districts have demonstrated that scientifically based reading instruction can and does work with all children. They have taught children—even those among the most difficult to educate—to become proficient readers by the end of third grade. Thus, the key to helping all children learn is to help teachers in each and every classroom benefit from the relevant research. That can be accomplished by providing professional development for teachers on the use of scientifically based reading programs, by using instructional materials and programs that are also based on sound scientific research, and by ensuring accountability through ongoing assessments.

Why is it so important for children to learn good reading skills in the early years of school?

Research shows that children who read well in the early grades are far more successful in later years; and those who fall behind often stay behind when it comes to academic achievement (Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998).[11] Reading opens the door to learning about math, history, science, literature, geography and much more. Thus, young, capable readers can succeed in these subjects, take advantage of other opportunities (such as reading for pleasure) and develop confidence in their own abilities. On the other hand, those students who cannot read well are much more likely to drop out of school and be limited to low-paying jobs throughout their lives. Reading is undeniably critical to success in today's society.

What is being done to help children learn to read well by the end of the third grade?

Improving the reading skills of children is a top priority for leaders at all levels of government and business, as well as for parents, teachers and countless citizens who volunteer at reading programs across the nation. At the national level, *No Child Left Behind* reflects this concern with the new program called Reading First. It is an ambitious national initiative designed to help every young child in every state become a successful reader. It is based on the expectation that instructional decisions for all students will be guided by the best available research. In recent years, scientific research has provided tremendous insight into exactly how children learn to read and the essential components for effective reading instruction. Reading First builds on this solid foundation of research.

Does *No Child Left Behind* support programs to help children build language and pre-reading skills before they start kindergarten?

Yes. The Early Reading First program supports preschool programs that provide a high-quality education to young children, especially those from low-income families. While early childhood programs are important for children's social, emotional and physical development, they are also important for children's early cognitive and language development. Research stresses the importance of early reading skills, including phonemic awareness and vocabulary development. Early Reading First supports programs to help preschoolers improve these skills. These programs can include professional development of staff and identifying and providing activities and instructional material. Programs must be grounded in scientifically based research, and their success must continually be evaluated.

Scientifically Based Research

There are a lot of education fads. Does *No Child Left Behind* do anything to prevent bad or untested programs from being used in the classroom?

For too many years, too many schools have experimented with lessons and materials that have proven to be ineffective—at the expense of their students. Under *No Child Left Behind*, federal support is targeted to those educational programs that have been demonstrated to be effective through rigorous scientific research. Reading First is such a program. Programs and practices grounded in scientifically based research are not fads or untested ideas; they have proven track records of success. By funding such programs, NCLB encourages their use, as opposed to the use of untried programs that may later turn out to be fads. Furthermore, NCLB's accountability requirements bring real consequences to those schools that continually do not improve student achievement as a result of using programs and practices for which there is no evidence of success. Such schools will be identified as needing improvement and required to make changes, including using education programs that are grounded in scientifically based research.

What is scientifically based research?

When reviewing research findings to determine whether they meet the criteria for scientifically based research, the following questions are important to consider:

1. **Use of rigorous, systematic and empirical methods.**
   Does the work have a solid theoretical or research foundation? Was it carefully designed to avoid biased findings and unwarranted claims of effectiveness? Does the research clearly delineate how the research was conducted, by whom it was conducted and on whom it was conducted?
2. **Adequacy of data to justify the general conclusions drawn.**
   Was the research designed to minimize alternative explanations for observed effects? Are the observed effects consistent with the overall conclusions and claims of effectiveness? Does the research present convincing documentation that the observed results were the result of the intervention? Does the research make clear what populations were studied (i.e., does it describe the participants' ages, as well as their demographic, cognitive, academic and behavioral characteristics) and does it describe to whom the findings can be generalized? Does the study provide a full description of the outcome measures?
3. **Reliance on methods that provide valid data across multiple measurements and observations.**
   Are the data based on a single-investigator, single-classroom study, or did multiple investigators in numerous locations collect similar data? What procedures were in place to minimize researcher biases? Do observed results hold up over time? Are the study interventions described in sufficient detail to allow for replicability? Does the research explain how instructional fidelity was ensured and assessed?
4. **Use of control groups.**
   Has a randomly assigned control group or some other kind of comparison group been used?
5. **Details allow for replication.**
   Does the study clearly explain how the treatment was designed? Is there enough detail to replicate the study?
6. **Acceptance by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts.**
   Has the review been rigorous and objective? Has the research been carefully reviewed by unbiased individuals who were not part of the research study? Have the findings been subjected to external scrutiny and verification?

For more information on quality research, go to the *What Works Clearinghouse* Web site at *www.w-w-c.org*.

SAFE SCHOOLS

How big a problem is crime in schools?

In 2000, students ages 12 through 18 were victims of about 1.9 million crimes at school, including about 128,000 serious violent crimes (including rape, sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault). In 2001, about 29 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 reported that someone had offered, sold or given them an illegal drug on school property (DeVoe, J.J, et al., 2002).[12] While overall school crime rates have declined over the last few years, violence, gangs and drugs are still present, indicating that more work needs to be done.

How can schools be made safer?

Title IV of NCLB provides support for programs to prevent violence in and around schools, to prevent the illegal use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco by young people, and to foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports academic achievement. Most of the funds are awarded to states, which, in turn, award money to the districts for a wide range of drug- and violence-prevention programs. These programs must address local needs as determined by objective data and be grounded in scientifically based prevention activities. They must also involve parents. The effectiveness of these programs must be measured and evaluated continuously.

What is the Gun-Free Schools Act?

The *Gun-Free Schools Act* requires each state that receives funds under NCLB to have in effect a state law requiring districts to expel for at least one year any student who brings a firearm to school or possesses a firearm in school. Additionally, it requires districts receiving funds under NCLB to have a policy requiring the referral of any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. These requirements not only remove potentially dangerous students from the school environment but also provide a deterrent, discouraging other students from bringing firearms to school. Over time, this has the potential to make the school environment safer by reducing the number of firearms present in schools. As teachers and students feel safe in their schools, they can focus on learning.

What is the Unsafe School Choice Option in *No Child Left Behind*?

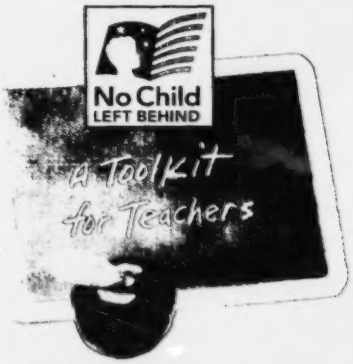
The Unsafe School Choice Option provision of *No Child Left Behind* requires that each state receiving funds under NCLB establish and implement a statewide policy requiring that students attending a persistently dangerous public elementary or secondary school, or students who become victims of a violent criminal offense while in or on the grounds of a public school that they attend, be allowed to attend a safe public school. More learning can take place in classrooms where students feel safe.

- Each state must have identified schools as persistently dangerous in sufficient time to offer a transfer option to students 14 days in advance of the start of the school year.
- Each state must have identified schools as persistently dangerous in sufficient time so that the district can offer a transfer option to affected students 14 days in advance of the start of the school year.

How can I find out more information about *No Child Left Behind*? What if my questions are not answered in this toolkit?

While the Department strives to provide timely and complete information on NCLB and how it impacts teachers and schools, we realize implementation is an ongoing process. As new questions, issues and ideas surface, more information and guidance may be added. If your questions are not answered here, please go to *www.nclb.gov* or call *1-800-USA-LEARN*. Teachers also should go to their state department of education Web site or district Web site for more detailed answers to specific questions about state and local requirements and policies regarding highly qualified teachers.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS



SUPPORTING AMERICA'S TEACHERS

As part of a historic effort to support teachers, *No Child Left Behind* and other federal education laws and policies provide vital assistance for America's teachers.

LIABILITY PROTECTION

Title II of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, as reauthorized by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, ensures that teachers, principals and other school professionals can undertake reasonable actions to maintain order and discipline in the classroom* without the fear of litigation. It provides civil immunity in any state court to teachers, instructors, principals, administrators and other education professionals for actions taken to maintain discipline, order or control in the school or classroom. Specifically, the law protects educators by:

- Limiting the financial liability of teachers for harm they may cause acting on behalf of the school in disciplining students or maintaining classroom order.
- Shielding teachers from liability when they act within the scope of their employment and in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws (including civil rights laws).
- Limiting the availability of punitive and noneconomic ("pain and suffering") damages against teachers when they are determined to be liable for their acts.
- Extending protection not only to teachers, but also to administrators, other school professionals, nonprofessional employees responsible for maintaining discipline or safety and individual school board members.

For more information, please review the specific language in the law at *www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02*.

LOAN FORGIVENESS

Under current law, any teacher in a qualified low-income school who is a new borrower as of October 1998 and teaches for five consecutive years is eligible for up to $5,000 in loan forgiveness for Stafford loans. In his FY 2004 budget proposal, President Bush proposed a substantial increase in the amount of loan forgiveness for teachers of mathematics, science and special education, *reaching up to $17,500 in loan forgiveness for each qualified individual teaching in high-poverty schools*. Congress is currently considering the president's proposal.

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Additionally, teachers of special education, mathematics, science, foreign language, bilingual education and other fields where a state has found a shortage of teachers may qualify for Perkins loan cancellation.

Tax Relief

Teachers often use their own resources to provide classroom supplies, supplemental materials and other classroom necessities. In 2003, teachers, instructors, counselors, principals and other school aides who work at least 900 hours during the school year are *eligible to deduct up to $250 of their non-reimbursed classroom expenses from their federal income tax, even if they do not itemize deductions.* Eligible expenses include books, supplies, computer equipment, software, services and other equipment and supplementary materials used in the classroom.

How *No Child Left Behind* Helps Teachers of English Language Learners

Speaking and Reading English Well Is Essential for Success in America

- Under *No Child Left Behind*, the academic progress of every child, including those learning English, will be tested in reading, math and eventually science. All English language learners will be tested annually to measure how well they are learning English, so parents and teachers will know how they are progressing. States and schools will be held accountable for results.
- Research shows that students who can't read or write in English have a greater likelihood of dropping out of school, and they often face a lifetime of diminished opportunity.[13]

No Child Left Behind Gives States the Freedom to Find the Best Methods of Instruction

- The new law does not dictate a particular method of instruction for learning English and other academic content.
- States and districts must establish English proficiency standards and provide high-quality language instruction, based on scientific research for English acquisition, in addition to high-quality academic instruction in reading and math.
- States and districts must place highly qualified teachers in classrooms where English language learners are taught.
- Children who are becoming fluent in English are also learning in academic content areas such as reading, math and science. They will be tested in these areas to evaluate progress.

No Child Left Behind Encourages All Schools to Use Scientifically Based Instruction Methods

For this reason, President Bush has called for new research to study the best ways to teach young boys and girls to become fluent in English. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Institute of Educational Sciences, the Office of English Language Acquisition, and the Office of Special Education are sponsoring research into:

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- Effective ways to spur English language learning for Spanish-speaking children.
- Effective methods for teaching children who may use a non-Roman alphabet (such as Korean, Chinese, Navajo or Russian) and how students transfer their skills to learning English.
- Methods for teaching all young learners.

The president's budget provides $665 million in fiscal year 2004 to help English language learners acquire English language skills. This is a 49 percent increase over fiscal year 2001 and includes $68 million set aside to prepare teachers of English language learners.

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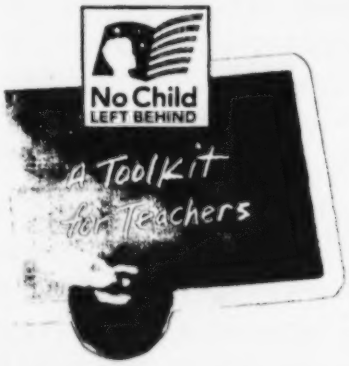

READING FIRST: A $6 BILLION INVESTMENT TO IMPROVE THE READING SKILLS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Reading First is one of the most important components of President Bush's *No Child Left Behind Act*—the bipartisan law to improve American education.

- The president requested increasing funds each year to ensure that states use scientifically based reading instruction and teaching methods. Unprecedented amounts of money are being put into improving the teaching of reading in our nation—more than $6 billion dollars over six years.

WHY ARE SCIENTIFICALLY BASED PROGRAMS IMPORTANT?

When it comes to our children, we cannot afford to use fads or fashions.

- The Food and Drug Administration never lets a new drug go on to the market until it has gone through strict safety tests and scientific study because the risks are just too high. So, too, in education we should not let teaching methods be tried out on children without scientific evaluation.
- Reading First does not just protect young minds, it encourages schools to use the reading instruction already proven by science.

WHY DO WE NEED READING FIRST?

For two decades reading achievement has been flat.

- Fewer than one in three fourth-graders are deemed "proficient" in reading at grade level.
- By twelfth grade only 40 percent of seniors are proficient in reading for their grade.
- ***America can do better.***

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How Reading First Will Help Teachers Teach Reading

Every Reading First grant will do four things in each state:

- Encourage reading programs based on scientifically based reading research—focusing on what works.
- Ensure early and ongoing assessment of every child's progress using the best analytical tools.
- Provide professional development and support for teachers.
- Help monitor reading achievement gains in grades K-3.

Reading First doesn't just spend more for reading. It spends more money, *more wisely*.

- Reading First requires that every state evaluate how resources are being used in its reading initiatives, where there are gaps in current instruction, how money can be spent to teach children better and whether teachers are getting the support they need to teach reading skills effectively.
- When teachers use curricula and methods that are based on sound scientific evidence, they can effectively reach children.

Reading First ensures federal grants will go only to those programs that will help teachers teach and help students excel.

- The *No Child Left Behind Act* created a Reading First Expert Review Panel made up of more than 70 researchers, experienced reading specialists and other professionals who understand the need for scientifically based reading and the importance of early reading skills. Early reading translates into better learning and more opportunities for our youth.

Reading First prevents federal money from financing unproven fads and untested ideas.

Each state's grant application must pass 25 specific review criteria to ensure that the state has a high-quality, comprehensive plan to improve student achievement in reading. Each plan includes the implementation of reading instruction based on the components that scientifically based research has shown are most effective in teaching children to be proficient readers:

- *Phonemic Awareness:* The ability to hear and identify individual sounds in spoken words.
- *Phonics:* The relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.
- *Fluency:* The capacity to read text accurately and quickly.
- *Vocabulary:* The words students must know to communicate effectively.
- *Comprehension:* The ability to understand and gain meaning from what has been read.

The plans also must include how the state will provide professional development for all teachers in the state to learn how to put instructional practices based on scientifically based reading research into action in their classrooms. Finally, states must outline how they will provide technical assistance to districts and schools implementing Reading First programs.

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Reading First is not a top-down Washington mandate. Reading First unites every part of the education establishment in the crusade to teach every child to read.

- Reading First rewards states that work closely with local schools to make sure that teachers, principals and local officials understand how to teach reading, not just what ought to be taught.
- Reading First highlights success so schools can see how scientifically based teaching methods and curricula can transform our schools.
- By testing children and monitoring state scores, Reading First puts schools on an upward path by focusing attention on what works in education and by showing the dramatic progress reached when scientifically based methods are embraced.

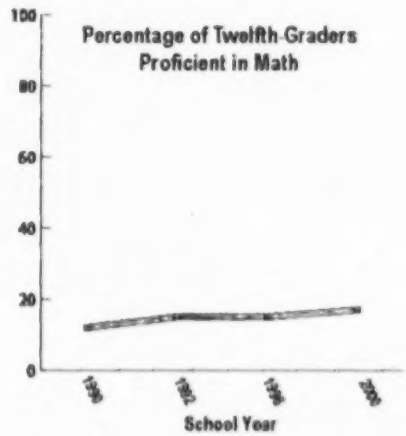
Thanks to Reading First, schools and teachers will have the technical knowledge and the practical training to ensure every child gets the help he or she needs to excel in reading.

How *No Child Left Behind* Helps Teachers Improve Math Achievement

Math is a critical skill in the information age. We must improve achievement to maintain our economic leadership. While technology advances with lightning speed, stagnant math performance in schools shortchanges our students' future and endangers our prosperity and our nation's security.

Math Achievement is Improving Slightly, But Much More Work Must Be Done to Ensure That Our Children Receive Sound Instruction in Mathematics

- According to the 2000 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),[13] the average math scores of fourth-, eighth- and twelfth-graders have improved only slightly.
- However, only a quarter of our fourth- and eighth-graders are performing at or above proficient levels in math. Twelfth-grade math scores have not improved since 1996, and a closer look at those scores reveals that the biggest drop occurred at the lowest levels of achievement. These are the students who most need our help and who can least afford to lose any more ground.



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics. The Nation's Report Card. Science 2000.

No Child Left Behind Creates Math and Science Partnerships to Rally Every Sector of Society to Work with Schools to Increase Math and Science Excellence

- The National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education will provide an estimated $1 billion over five years for results-oriented partnerships between local districts and universities to bring urgency, tested methods, and high-level expertise to rebuilding math excellence.

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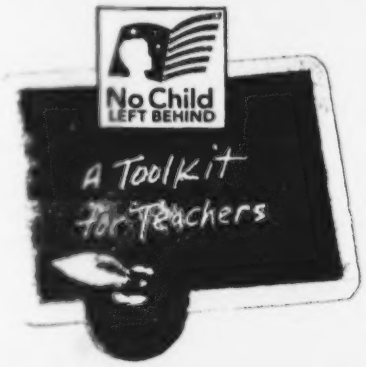
- Partnerships will invite businesses, science centers, museums and community organizations to unite with schools to improve achievement.
- The program rewards states for increasing participation of students in advanced courses in math and science and passing advanced placement exams.
- To ensure accountability, the partnerships must report annually to the U.S. secretary of education on progress in meeting their set objectives, aligned to state standards.

The President has Called for Increasing the Ranks and Pay of Teachers of Math and Science

- *No Child Left Behind* requires states to fill the nation's classrooms with teachers who are knowledgeable and experienced in math and science by 2005. The president supports paying math and science teachers more to help attract experience and excellence.

Our Nation Must Research the Best Way to Teach Math and Science and Measure Students' Progress in Math

- *No Child Left Behind* requires that federal funding go only to those programs that are backed by evidence.
- Over the last decade, researchers have scientifically proven the best ways to teach reading. We must do the same in math. That means using only research-based teaching methods and rejecting unproven fads.
- The new law also requires states to measure students' progress in math annually in grades 3-8 beginning in 2005.



How Can I Find Out More About *No Child Left Behind?*

For more information about the law, teacher quality and other related subjects, go to:

www.nclb.gov or www.ed.gov	General link to all NCLB related sites and the Department of Education.
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/legislation.html	Details on the legislation, regulations and guidance about NCLB.
www.ed.gov/news/landing.jhtml	Details about media events and related information regarding NCLB.
www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/achiever/index.html	*The Achiever*—a regular NCLB newsletter.
www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/nclbguide/titles.html	An overview of each title in NCLB.
www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/nclbguide/parentsguide.pdf	*A Parents Guide to NCLB.*
www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/extracredit/	NCLB Extra Credit—a look at implementation around the United States.
www.ed.gov/admins/tchrqual/learn/tpr/	Grant opportunities for teachers and principals.
www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/guidance.doc	Guidance on Title II and general teacher quality questions and answers.
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/	Information on English language learners.
www.ncela.gwu.edu/tan/index.htm	National Center for English Language Acquisition.
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/	Information on special education and rehabilitation services.
www.ed.gov/about/pubs/intro/index.html	United States Department of Education publications.
www.ed.gov/free	Teaching and learning resources from more than 35 federal agencies.

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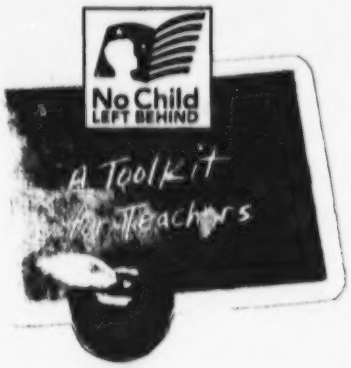
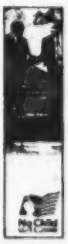
PUBLICATIONS



BOOKMARKS AND BROCHURES

The following publications, bookmarks and brochures are available for you to order for your classroom. If you would like multiple copies, please contact EDPubs, the Department of Education's publications distribution center, at *edpubs@inet.ed.gov* or 1-877-4-ED-PUBS. To order online, go to: *www.edpubs.org*.



Failure Is Not an Option

This two-sided bookmark features quotes from President George W. Bush and Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

Reading Tips for Parents

English on one side and Spanish on the other, this bookmark lists seven things parents can do to help their children learn to read.

Ten Facts Every Parent Should Know About the No Child Left Behind Act

This pocket-sized brochure is provided in both English and Spanish.

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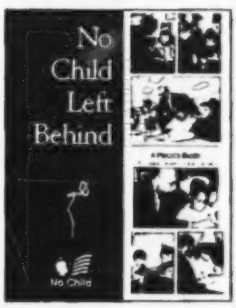
PUBLICATIONS

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: A TOOLKIT FOR TEACHERS

This guide summarizes the highly qualified teacher provisions of No Child Left Behind, answers common questions and provides information on where to find additional resources.



NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: A PARENTS GUIDE

This guide summarizes the main provisions of the law, answers common questions and provides information on where to find additional resources.

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Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read

A resource for teachers, this booklet summarizes what researchers have discovered about how to teach children to read successfully. It describes the findings of the National Reading Panel Report and provides analysis and discussion in five areas of reading instruction: phonemic awareness; phonics; fluency; vocabulary; and text comprehension. Each section suggests implications for classroom instruction as well as other information.

Homework Tips for Parents

With information in both English and Spanish, this publication includes general homework tips for parents, reading homework tips and math homework tips.

Reading Tips for Parents

With information in both English and Spanish, this publication includes information about effective early reading programs and strategies for creating strong readers.

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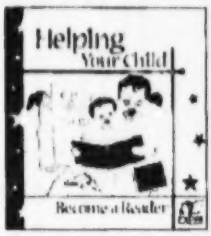

Helping Your Child Become a Reader

Available in both English and Spanish, this guide offers pointers on how to build the language skills of young children. It also includes a list of typical language accomplishments for different age groups, suggestions for books and resources for children with reading problems or learning disabilities.

Put Reading First: Helping Your Child Learn to Read

This brochure, designed for parents of young children, describes the kinds of early literacy activities that should take place at school and at home to help children learn to read successfully. It is based on the findings of the National Reading Panel.

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ENDNOTES:

[1] *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB or *No Child Left Behind*) is the name for the reauthorized (and amended) *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA). For the purposes of this document, the law is referred to as *No Child Left Behind* or NCLB.

[2] National Center for Education Statistics. (2000) *Digest of Education Statistics—Table 166*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

[3] Snow, C.E., Burns, S.M., and Griffin, P. (Eds.) (1998) *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

[4] National Center for Education Statistics. (2000) *NAEP 1999 Trends in Academic Progress: Three Decades of Student Performance*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education. Note: Reading scores are the average scores for 9-year-olds, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). A score of 200 implies an ability to understand, combine ideas and make inferences based on short, uncomplicated passages about specific or sequentially related information.

[5] National Center for Education Statistics. (2003) *The Nation's Report Card: Fourth-Grade Reading Highlights 2002*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

[6] Sanders, W. and Rivers, J. (November,1996). *Cumulative and Residual Effects of Teachers on Future Student Academic Achievement*. Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center.

[7] Whitehurst, G. (2002). *Research on Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*. Washington, D.C.: White House Conference on Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers.

[8] Ingersoll, R. (January, 2002). *Out of Field Teaching, Educational Inequality, and the Organization of Schools: An Exploratory Analysis*. University of Washington Center for Study of Teaching and Policy.

[9] National Center for Education Statistics. (2003) *The Nation's Report Card: Fourth-Grade Reading Highlights 2002*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

[10] *National Reading Panel*. (2000) *Report of the National Reading Panel—Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

[11] Snow, C.E., Burns, S.M., and Griffin, P. (Eds.) (1998) *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

[12] Devoe, J.F, Peter, K., Kaufman, P., Ruddy, S.A., Miller, A.K., Planty, M., Snyder, T.D., Duhart, D.T., and Rand, M.R. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2002*. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. NCES 2003-009/NCJ 196753. Washington, D.C.: 20202.

[13] National Center for Education Statistics. (2001) *English Literacy and Language Minorities in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

[14] National Center for Education Statistics. (2001) *The Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2000*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

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